

LEARNING IN PRIVATE WHAT TO TEACH IN PUBLIC

NO. 2674

A SERMON
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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*“What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and
what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.”
Matthew 10:27*

I HOPE that many who are now present long beyond everything else to be useful to their fellow-creatures. We do not want to go to heaven alone, we are most anxious to lead others to the Savior. I remember a very remarkable telegram, which was sent from England, by a lady who had sailed from New York with all her children. She landed in England after being shipwrecked, but she had to send to her husband this brief but suggestive telegram, “Saved—*alone*.”

Ah! that last sad word seemed as if it took almost all the sweetness out of the first one. “Saved alone.” May that never be what we shall have to say as we enter heaven, but may we have the privilege of saying, “Here am I, Father, and the children whom thou hast given me.” May it be my joy to be able to say, “Here am I and all my congregation, saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.”

So we begin with the assurance that all of you who know the Lord want to be useful, but if that is to be the case, preparation is necessary. You say that you are going out to battle, young man, do you? Well, do not be in such a hurry. You have no rifle or sword, you will be in the way of the other soldiers rather than an addition to them. Unless you are, first of all, properly trained, you will certainly make a failure of your soldiering. The man who jumps into the army is not a warrior all at once, there must be drill, there must be a certain course of training, before he can be of any service to the Queen.

So is it with Christ's disciples. He did not send them out to preach directly He called them from their former occupations, but He kept them with Himself for a time till they had learned at least some of the lessons they were to impart to others, for how could they teach what they did not know? Can a thing which is not in a man come out of him? And if it has never been put into him, how can it be got out of him?

So our Savior, in the words of our text, encouraged His disciples to proclaim, even upon the housetops, the Gospel which He had revealed to them, but He also gave them to understand that, first of all, they had need of preparation before they would be qualified to deliver their message, “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.”

I. I want, first, to speak to you, who desire to work for Jesus, concerning his own definition of AN INVALUABLE PRIVILEGE FOR ALL CHRISTIANS, “What I tell you in darkness,” “what ye hear in the ear.”

From our Lord's words, I learn that it is the great privilege of Christians to realize, first, that *Christ is still alive, and still with His people*, still conversing with His chosen ones, still by His Divine Spirit speaking out of His very heart into the hearts of His true disciples. Christ was born an infant, but He is no infant now. Christ died, but He is not dead now. He is risen, He has gone up into His glory, He sits upon the throne of God, but at the same time, by a very real spiritual presence He is with all His people, as He said to His disciples, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

And there is nothing that can so fit a man for holy service as to have Christ's eyes looking into his eyes, and reading him through and through, and to have Christ's pierced hand laid on his heart till the

very impress of its wound is there reproduced, filling that heart with a loving grief for others. “Oh!” says one, “I think that I could speak for Christ if that should ever be true to me.”

Ah! my friend, you will never speak aright until it is true to you. Not with those mortal eyes will you see Him, but your heart shall behold Him without any help from those dull optics. Not with your ears shall you hear His voice, but your heart shall attend to His message without the use of those poor impediments of ears. You shall know that He is with you, you shall be sure of it, for His life shall touch your life, his spirit shall flood and overflow your spirit, and then, but not till then, shall you be fit to speak in His name. That is the first part of this invaluable privilege—we are permitted to realize our Lord’s presence with us personally.

Next, *we are enabled to feel Christ’s word as spoken to us*, “I tell you.” The message of the Gospel is applied by Christ directly and distinctly to our own soul. We do not look for any new revelation, but we do expect the old revelation to be made to our hearts and consciences in all its wondrous power. We expect that the words which Jesus spoke should ring in our souls with such music as they evoked when He first uttered them, and that we should, by the working of His Spirit, feel the force of those words just as they did who heard Him with their outward ears, and we shall never fully preach the Gospel till then.

A man may go to College, he may learn all about the letter of Scripture, but he is no minister of God if he has not sat at Jesu’s feet, and learned of Him, and when he has learned of Him, and the truth has come home to his heart as his own personal possession given to him by Christ, then shall he speak with more than mortal power, but not till then.

Step back into the rear rank, sir, if Christ has never spoken to you thus, and wait there until he has done so. If the Master has given you no message, do not run, what is the use of running if you have nothing to tell? Do you think that you are to make up your own message as you run? Ah! then, you are not Christ’s servant, for His servant waits until He has heard the message from his Master, and then it is both his duty and his privilege to tell it out just as he has heard it, “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear,”—“I myself whispering it into your personal ear, that you may receive it direct from me—this it is which you are to go and proclaim upon the housetops.”

The text seems to imply that *these communications are made to us again and again*. There are some of us who are called to spend our whole lives in our Master’s service, and unless we are often alone with Him, listening to the message He has for us to deliver, our streams will not continue to run. I thank God that, during the last few weeks, while I have been in the South of France, I have had a blessed period of privately hearing the word afresh from the Master.

It has been a constant joy and delight to me to meditate again and again upon the truths which I have preached, to feed upon them in my own soul, and in quiet communion with God to be gathering spiritual stores of nourishment for you, of which, first of all, I had proved the power and preciousness to my own heart.

I would earnestly urge all Christian workers to be sure to get some time alone for the prayerful study of the Word. The more of such time that you can get, the better will it be both for yourself and for others. You know that it is impossible for a sower of seed to be always scattering, and never gathering—the seed-basket must be filled again and again, or the sowing must come to an end. You cannot keep on distributing bread and fish to the multitude, as the disciples did, unless, every now and then, you go back to the Master, and say, “My Lord, I need more bread and more fish, for my supply is running short. Give me more that I may give out more.”

Make such occasions as often as you can. I am glad to see so many of you, my young friends, busy for the Master, but I pray you not to forget that it was Mary, who sat at the Master’s feet, of whom He said that she had chosen that good part which should not be taken away from her. It is well to be like Martha, busy on your Lord’s behalf, but you cannot do without Mary’s quiet meditation. You must have the contemplation as well as the activity, or else you will do mischief, and not really honor the Master.

Suppose you see a carpenter, with a little hammer in his hand, go round the workshop, and gently tap a hundred nails on the head, you rightly say that he has not done any good at all. But here is another

workman, with a good heavy hammer, and when he does hit a nail, he drives it home, and he does not leave it till he has driven it home, and clinched it too. There is a way of seeming to be doing a great deal, and yet really doing nothing, and there is also a way of apparently doing but little, but then it is good solid work, thoroughly well done. Nobody can do this solid, permanent work, in a spiritual sense, without often getting alone with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Avail yourselves also, dear friends, of those special opportunities which God makes for you to receive His messages. Sometimes He takes one of His servants, and puts him right away for a while. “Be thou silent,” says He, “and I will talk to thee.” Perhaps the Lord takes away the strength, the bodily vigor of his servant, there is the Christian woman, who longs to be going up and down her district, laid upon a sick bed, or there is the earnest, faithful Sunday-school teacher, no longer able to instruct his class. Yet it is in God’s wisdom that the nets are sometimes drawn out of the water, that there may be an opportunity to mend them, otherwise they would not always take the fish that are ready to be caught.

It is true economy to let the cannon rest till it gets cool, or else there may be mischief done to the men who are firing it, instead of to the enemy and all of us need rest, every now and then, if we are to be fitted for future service. Above all, we need often to go to Christ, to get from his hand a fresh stock of that Gospel provision which we are afterwards to dispense to the people in his name. I pray you, who are seeking to serve the Savior, to take good note of the advice I have been trying to give you.

II. Now, secondly, this going to Christ, to hear the Word directly from Him, is itself A MOST BLESSED PREPARATORY PROCESS FOR ALL CHRISTIAN WORKERS. Let me show you how it is so.

First, if you get your message of mercy directly and distinctly from the living Christ, *you will have truth in its personality*—living, acting, feeling, for He is “the way, the truth, and the life.” The message will come to you with power because He uttered it, and you will therefore preach Him as well as it. We do not want a misty, cloudy Christ—a sort of impalpable phantom, to comfort us, we want a real Christ, God and man, really among us, and really able to save unto the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him.

So, my dear brother, if you go to Him for your message, you will be sure not to forget Him. He will be real to you, and your teaching will make Him real to other people. Some ministers preach very finely about Christ, but that which saves sinners is preaching Christ Himself. He is our salvation, and we shall never put that salvation in tangible, graspable, real form unless we go to Him, and get distinctly from Himself the message we are to deliver on His behalf.

By doing this, we shall also have *truth in all its purity*. You know that, when the light of the Gospel shines through me, it takes a little tinge of color from me, just as when it shone through Luther, there was a Lutheran shade about the truth, and when it shone through John Calvin, there was a Calvinistic tinge. Shining through any man, God’s light will be tinged to a certain extent, just as it is when shining through the very best glass that was ever made. You had better get into the sunlight for yourself, so that you may have it in all its purity.

I am of the mind of that man who said that the milk was so bad where he lived that he would move into the country, and keep a cow for himself. It is just so with the Gospel, there is nothing like going to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as to the well-head of doctrine, and saying to Him, “Master, what dost thou teach? What can I learn from thee?” Our unfailing rule is—What did Jesus say about this or that? How did His Spirit speak by the apostles? It is that living with Christ, from day to day, which will give us the truth of God in all its purity.

And it will also give us *truth in its due proportions*. We are all of us lopsided in one way or another. I suppose that there is not a pair of eyes in this world that is absolutely a pair. There is scarcely anything about us that is exactly as it ought to be, we are all of us somewhat wrong, and hence, there is no man who teaches all truth in its exact proportions.

One man sees the responsibility of man, and he preaches it, another sees the sovereignty of God, and he preaches that. Cannot we find a brother who preaches both those truths? Yes, no doubt we can, but

then, that brother will probably fail to see some other truth. If we knew all truths in their right proportions, we should be God rather than man, for we should practically possess omniscience.

But to avoid giving undue prominence to any one truth, and casting another truth into the shade, the best remedy is to get your teaching direct from Christ himself. You think you see a certain doctrine in the Bible, well, then, take it to Him who gave you the Bible, and say, “Blessed Lord Jesus, by thy Spirit, teach this doctrine to me. Let me know, by thy teaching, what this passage of Scripture means, for I am prepared to receive whatever thou dost impart to me.”

If you do this, dear friends, you will get truth in its personality, truth in its purity, truth in its due proportions.

And let me add, that you will then get *truth in its power*. When the truth of God has broken your heart, and afterwards bound it up, when Christ has so spoken it to you that you have felt the power of it, then you will speak it as men should speak who are ambassadors for God. George Fox was called a Quaker because, when he preached, he often trembled and quaked. Was that folly on his part? Nay, for he had so felt the power of what he spoke that his very body was full of emotion while he delivered that truth to others. And well may you and I also tremble at the Word of the Lord.

But on the other hand, whenever that Word comes home with sweetness to the heart, you must often have noticed with what sweetness the man tells it out to others. There is nobody who can preach the Gospel like the man who has experienced its power. You know that the tale of a tale, the report of a report, is a very poor thing, but when a man gets up, and says, concerning some notable event, “I was there, I saw it all,” then you listen to him. So, if you can say of Christ, “He is indeed precious, for He is precious to me, He can save, for He has saved me, He can comfort, and cheer, and gladden, for He has done all that to me,”—then you speak with power to others, because Christ has spoken with power to you.

And there is something more than that. A man who receives the Gospel distinctly from Christ will speak *the truth in Christ’s spirit*. Did you ever hear a man preach the Gospel in a passion? You wonder at my question, yet such a thing has happened, but if you are present on such an occasion, you feel sure that the man did not get his message—or at any rate, he did not get his manner—from his Master.

The other day, I saw a man offer a bit of bread to a poor, lean, half-starved dog, the animal did not seem to care for bread, so he turned away, and then, directly, the man was so angry with the creature because he would not have the bread that he threw a stone at him. There is a certain kind of preaching that is just like that, the minister seems to say, “You dogs of sinners, there is the Gospel for you, will you have it? If you do not, I will throw a stone at you.” Well now, neither dogs nor men admire that sort of treatment, and certainly, the Lord Jesus Christ never intended us to deliver his message in that kind of fashion.

There are some, I believe, who preach the doctrines of grace very much as a dog of mine acts with his rug. When I go home tonight, he will bring it out, and drag it up to my feet, just because he wants me to try and take it away from him, that he may growl over it. So have I seen some people preach the doctrine of election, and other truths like it, as if they wanted some Arminian to try to run away with them, or have a fight over them. Now that is not the way which Christ teaches us to preach, he never bids us proclaim the Gospel in such a way that we seem to want to make an Irish fight over it. No, no, no, go direct to Christ for truth, and you will preach it strongly, honestly, openly, positively, but you will always preach it with love.

That is the plan I recommend to you—the system of getting the Gospel fresh from the mouth of Jesus, and then delivering it, as far as we can, in Jesus Christ’s tones and in Jesus Christ’s spirit. I can assure you, my dear friends, that we shall never know how Jesus preached till we hear Him speak in our hearts, and then endeavor to imitate the tone of that speech which our inward ears have heard. Oh, to preach Christ in a Christly way—to tell of mercy in the spirit of mercy, and to preach grace in a truly gracious way!

Here is the time to say that, if you go to Christ for all the truth you preach, and if you proclaim it in His way, then you will preach it with what is called “unction.” Do you know what unction is? I do, but I cannot tell you. I can tell when a man has not any unction, and I can tell when he has, but I do not know exactly how to define and describe it, except by saying that it is a special anointing from the Spirit of God.

There is an old Romish tale of a monk who had been the means of converting great numbers of persons, but on a certain occasion, he was detained in his journey, and could not reach the congregation in time to conduct the service. The devil thought it was a fine opportunity for him to speak to the people, so, putting on the cowl of the monk, he went into the pulpit, and preached, according to the story, he preached about hell—a subject with which he was well acquainted—and the hearers listened very attentively.

Before he finished his discourse, the holy man appeared, and made the devil disclose himself in his proper form. “Get you gone,” said he to Satan, “but however dared you preach the truth as you were doing when I came in?” “Oh!” replied Satan, “I did not mind preaching the truth, for there was no unction in it, so I knew that it could not do any hurt to my cause.” It was a curious legend, but there was a great truth at the bottom of it—where there is no unction, it does not matter what we preach, or how we preach it.

One of my friends behind me sometimes says to me, after the service, “I believe that God has been blessing the people, for there has been plenty of dew about.” That is what we want, that holy dew, which the Spirit of God so graciously bestows. You may preach to one congregation, but it is all in vain, for there is no dew about, but at another time, it is sweet preaching and blessed hearing, because there is plenty of dew about, and the way to get that dew is by coming straight out of the Master’s presence, with the Master’s message ringing in your own ear, to tell it out as nearly as possible as He has told it to you.

Once more, this preparation for declaring the truth is very valuable, because it enables a man to have *truth in its certainty*. Concerning the truth of God, questions are continually being raised nowadays, many people ask, with Pilate, “What is truth?” Even preachers put that question. Why do they not hold their tongues until they know?

Suppose a servant comes to the door to bring you the answer to a question which you have sent to her mistress. She begins to talk on all sorts of subjects, and you say to her, “Do you not know what the reply is from your mistress to my inquiry?” She says, “Well, to tell you the truth, I have not been to her to know what her reply is, but I am making up an answer myself.” Of course, you say to her, “I do not want to hear your answer, go to your mistress at once, and whatever message she has to send to me, kindly report it to me, for that is all I want to know.”

So we say to the minister, “Tell us what your Master has told you, we don’t want to hear anything else.” If he says, “I think—er, I beg your pardon, I am very anxious not to appear dogmatical, but with great diffidence I submit to you,” you reply, “My dear sir, we want you to be dogmatical. If you have been to your Master, and he has given you a message for us, tell it to us, and if you have not been to Him, and He has not told you anything to say on His behalf, then clear out of that pulpit, for you have no right to be there. Go and earn an honest living at breaking stones, or something of that sort.”

An ambassador who is not commissioned by his sovereign had better be sent home by the first ship that is going that way. He who comes professedly as a messenger from God, and yet declares that, for the life of him, he does not know what God would have him preach, proclaims his own condemnation, and we say to him, “We cannot let our souls run the risk of being lost, so, if you have no message from Christ for us, we will not waste our time by listening to you.”

Be sure, dear friends, to have as your minister a man who lives with God, and walks with God, a man who leans his head on the bosom of Jesus, and then comes forward and speaks what his Master has whispered right into his ear. Men are startled when they hear him, they say, “Who is this fellow? Where did he learn such things?” But with awful earnestness, so that his hearers sometimes think him half-demented, he tells out what he feels that he must tell out because he has received it from his Lord and

Master. He says, “That is the truth, whether you take it or leave it. I will preach to you nothing but what God has told me. I cannot and I dare not turn aside from what I believe to be His teaching.”

Look at Martin Luther whom God raised up to speak so bravely for Him. People said, “This man is so positive, so dogmatic;” but he could not be otherwise, his whole heart and soul were possessed by certain great truths, and he felt that he must proclaim them, whether men put him in prison, or dragged him away to the stake. And such a man, speaking after that fashion, shook the Vatican and the most powerful empires of the earth, and was the means of bringing light to multitudes who otherwise would have remained in darkness.

In like manner as the Reformer did, get you to your Lord, my brother, get you to your Savior, my sister, receive your message from Him, and what he speaks privately into your ear, that tell you wherever you have the opportunity, but mind that you do not tell anything else.

III. Now I must finish with THE CONSEQUENT PROCLAMATION, “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.”

First, it has been told me in the ear, and whispered into my very soul, that *there is pardon for the greatest guilt through faith in Jesus Christ*—that His precious blood, shed on Calvary’s cross, is able to cleanse from all sin of every kind, and that as many as believe in Him are saved. “Their sins, which were many, are all forgiven.” I heard this said once, and I thought it was true, nay, I heard it many times from those who would not have said what was false.

But on a never-to-be-forgotten day, I myself looked to Him who did hang upon the cross. It had been dark days with my spirit until then, and my burden had been exceedingly heavy, I was like a man who would have preferred to die rather than to live, and I might even have laid violent hands upon myself, in the hope of ending my misery, but that the dread of something worse after death did haunt me. I found neither rest nor respite until I heard one say, “Look unto Christ, and you shall be saved. Look, young man, look, for He says, ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth,’” and there and then I did look unto Him, and that my sins were at that moment forgiven me, I do know as surely as I know that I am standing here, and speaking to you.

I might be made to doubt some things about which I feel tolerably certain, but I must absolutely lose my reason before I can ever doubt the fact that I then passed out of despair into something higher than hope, and rose from the very gates of hell into a joy that is with me, even now. Shall I not tell to others what the grace of God has done for me? Shall I not lay hold of every poor sinner’s hand, and say, “Look you to Christ, and you also shall be saved, even as I was?” Shall I not, from the very housetops, shout again and again—

*“There is life for a look at the Crucified One;
There is life at this moment for thee?”*

Further, there is another thing that has been whispered in my ear. It is that, *by faith in Christ, the ruling power of sin is immediately broken*, and that every sin, of every kind, may be overcome by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. I heard one man laughing at another because he said that he had a clean heart.

Ah, me! but that may have been true, for every man who believes in Christ has a clean heart. Are you nominally a Christian, and yet your Christianity does not make you holy? I implore you to throw such worthless Christianity to the dogs, for it is worse than useless to you. If your religion does not make you holy, it will damn you as surely as you are now alive. It is simply a painted pageantry to go to hell in, but it is not the true religion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He that believes in Christ shall be delivered from sin, he shall trample it under his feet, he may have a life-long battle with it, nay, I am sure he will have that, else Christ would never have taught His disciples to pray, “Lead us not into temptation.” When there is no more sin in us, we need not fear temptation, there is no risk of fire to the man who has no tinder in his heart. The Lord can keep His people, and He will preserve them. “He will keep the feet of his saints.”

Brother, have you fallen into drunkenness? Faith in Christ can turn that cup bottom upwards for you. Are you a swearer? My Master can rinse your mouth out, so that you shall never speak in that shameful fashion any more, or even be tempted to do so, for I have known swearers cured in a moment, and the temptation to blaspheme has never come back to them.

Have you been a thief, or a liar? Have you been a fornicator, or an adulterer? Are you unjust, unholy, and unclean? There is provision for washing sinners such as you are, there is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, and Christ can deliver you from the power as well as from the penalty of sin. Only trust Him about it, come and rest your soul upon him. Oh! if there be a harlot here, or a man who has fallen into all sorts of gross sin, Christ can and will deliver you if you will only come and repose your heart's trust in Him.

I cannot tell you all that I have had whispered into my ear, but I must mention one other thing that I know, it is that *faith in Christ can save a man from every sort of fear in life and in death*. Faith in Christ can make even trouble to be welcome, and affliction to be regarded as again. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can make poverty to be sweet, and sickness to be borne with patience. The ills of life are turned into blessings when once a man believes in Jesus, and fully trusts in Him. I am not now saying what I alone know, but what a great many others here also know. There are hundreds—I might truthfully say thousands—here who can say the same as I can about these matters.

Let me prove my assertion. You who have found that faith in Christ sweetens life to you, speak out, and say, "Yes." Has Christ sweetened life to you who have believed in Him? If so, say, "Yes." [Many voices: "Yes."] Of course you can say it, and you are not ashamed to say it over and over again, is He the joy of your heart? [Voices: "Yes."] Has He made your very soul to leap within you when you have kept close to Him? [Voices: "Yes."]

I knew that you would answer "Yes" to that question, for it is even so with you, there is a joy, which sometimes comes upon the Christian, and which I cannot attempt to describe, but it bears us right away above all physical pain, and everything that might depress the spirit, and the heart is made strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Oh, He is a precious Christ! Is there one person here who has trusted in Christ, who is willing to give Him up? [Voices: "No."] There is not one, I am sure. You hardly need to answer the question, for there never was one individual, who really knew Christ, who could give Him up. They who leave Him have only fancied that they knew Him, they have never really trusted him.

Possibly, dear friend, you are in trouble because you say that you feel afraid to die tonight. Well, but perhaps you are not going to die tonight, and therefore, dying grace has not yet been given to you. But when the time comes for you to die, then very likely you will not feel the slightest fear. My brother said to me, the other day, when he had been seeing one of our members pass away, "Brother, we can say to one another what the two Wesleys said, 'Our people die well.'" So they do, they often die shouting for very joy, and at any rate, they go home peacefully, quietly welcoming the everlasting future and the glory that Christ has laid up for them.

Oh, yes! we know that "to die is gain." Some of us have been laid very low, and we have thought that we were about to die, and we have had the greatest joy then—greater than we ever knew before in all our lives, and therefore, we tell it out to others, and we mean to tell it out as long as we live.

Salvation by grace, through faith in Jesus, is no dream, no fiction, let sceptics say what they will. Our experience—and we are as honest as they are, and no more fanatical than they are—our experience agrees with what our Lord has revealed to us in His Word, and therefore, when we preach the Gospel, or relate what grace has done for us, we use Christ's very words, and say, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

God grant that many of you may be able to bear similar testimony, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

MATTHEW 10:1-27

Verses 1-4. *And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.*

The lesson to be learnt from these names is, first, that these men are mentioned in couples, and I think that, as a rule, God's servants work best in pairs. In other senses than the matrimonial one, it is not good that man should be alone. Moses needs Aaron, Peter needs Andrew, James needs John. It is well to be of such a temperament and disposition that you can work harmoniously with another of your Lord's servants. If you cannot, pray God to alter you.

Notice that expression, in the third verse, "*and Bartholomew.*" I think there is not a single instance in the New Testament where Bartholomew is mentioned without the word "*and*" before or after his name—"and Bartholomew," or "Bartholomew and" someone else. Perhaps he was not a man who ever began any work by himself, but he was a grand man to join in and help it on when somebody else had started it. So, dear friend, if you are not qualified to be a leader in the Church of Christ, be willing to be Number Two, but do serve the Master, in some capacity or other, with all your might. Be a brother who carries an "*and*" with him wherever he goes, be like a horse, that has his harness on, and is ready to be hooked into the team. That is the lesson of the two words "*and Bartholomew.*"

The last lesson from the names is at the end of the fourth verse, "*and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.*" He preached of Christ, he worked miracles in the name of Christ, he was ordained as one of the apostles of Christ, yet he was "*the son of perdition.*" Oh! let none of us be content merely with our official position, or trust in the good which we hope we have done, or in any gifts with which the Master has entrusted us. Judas Iscariot had all these marks of distinction, yet he betrayed his Lord. God grant that no one among us may turn out to be a Judas Iscariot!

5-6. *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

The Gospel is now to be preached to every creature in all the world, but in those days, it was to be proclaimed first to the Jews, then to the Samaritans, and afterwards to the Gentiles as a whole. The largeness of our commission to "*preach the gospel to every creature*" need not prevent our following providential directions to make it known in one place rather than in another. It is well for the servants of Christ always to ask their Master where they are to go. You know how it is recorded, in the Acts of the Apostles, that Paul and Silas "*essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.*" Ask the Lord, therefore, where thou shalt work, as well as what thy work shall be, for thy Master knows how thou canst best serve him.

7. *And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

That blessed kingdom, which is now set up among men, of which Christ is the King, and I hope many of us are the subjects. That kingdom was then "*at hand.*"

8. *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.*

"Exercise your healing arts most freely. They cost you nothing, let them not cost anything to those who receive the benefit of them."

9-10. *Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.*

They were to “quarter on the enemy,” as we say. Wherever they went, they would be furnished with food, and raiment, and shelter, if they faithfully executed the commission with which their Master had entrusted them.

11-13. *And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.*

How about your houses, dear friends. Are they “worthy” houses, in this New Testament sense? If an apostle came there, could he bring “peace” to it? Or would he have to take the peace away with him to some other house that was more worthy to receive it?

14-15. *And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.*

Despised and rejected privileges make the fiercest fuel for the fires of hell. They who might have heard the Gospel, and would not hear it, shall find the hand of God more heavy upon them than it will be even upon the accursed Sodomites. Woe, then, unto such as live in London, yet who will not hear the Word of the Lord, or when they do hear it, will not accept it!

16-17. *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men:*

“Do not trust yourselves with them.”

17-19. *For they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.*

“Let it not fret you that you are not orators, that you are not men of culture, speak what God the Holy Spirit shall teach you to say, and leave the result with him.”

20. *For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.*

Oh! that is grand—when a man has so communed with God that the very Spirit of the Father has entered into him. Then shall there be a wondrous power about his speech, men may not understand whence it came, but they will be obliged to feel the force of it.

21. *And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.*

Read the martyrologies, and see whether it was not exactly as our Lord foretold that it would be. In martyr times, men often burst all the bonds of natural affection, and betrayed even their own fathers or children to death. Yet the saints quailed not, they were content to let every earthly tie be snapped so that the tie of their heavenly and eternal relationship might be confirmed. So may it be with us also!

22-27. *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.*

God help us so to do, for Christ's sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—785, 766, 658, 538

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